

Bumble Bee



GARDEN EARTH
NATURALIST
ECO-SERVICE CARDS

BUMBLEBEE

FAMILY: Apidae

ORDER: Hymenoptera

IDENTIFICATION CLUES



- ◆ worker bees (most commonly seen) are 1/2 - 3/4 inch; queens are slightly larger
- ◆ large, furry bees; black with yellow or orange on the thorax and abdomen
- ◆ pollen baskets on hind legs
- ◆ most often seen when busy gathering nectar and pollen



Where to Look:

Bumblebees are found in woodlands, meadows, gardens, fields and bogs or any place flowers are abundant.

Who Eats It?

Skunks will destroy the nests of bumblebees to get the honey and larvae and they will even eat the adult bees. Also some parasitic flies will live off the honey and pollen collected by the bees.



LIFE CYCLE

COMPLETE METAMORPHOSIS

Bumblebees are social insects and live in colonies of up to 400. In spring, the queen builds a nest in the ground, lays eggs and builds "honeypots" to feed the larvae. Female workers develop first. They feed and take care of all the larvae and pupae produced by the queen.

What It Eats

Bumblebees feed on nectar and pollen. In the process of collecting, they transfer pollen between flowers making them excellent pollinators.



Did You Know

Bumblebees are aggressive defenders of their nests. Some other bees and even flies mimic bumble bees as a type of protection from predators.

Role in the Ecosystem

Bumblebees are excellent and important pollinators.